

**REMARKS**

Claims 1 and 5-15 are now pending in this application. Claims 2-3 have previously been canceled and claim 5 is a canceled by this amendment. Each of the pending claims is believed to define an invention which is novel and unobvious over the cited references. An information disclosure statement citing art from the corresponding German application is submitted herewith. Favorable reconsideration of this case is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,376,957 to Haydock et al. in further view of U.S. Patent Number 3,135,211 to Pezzillo and U.S. Patent Number 4,227,108 to Washizu et al. and U.S. Patent Number 2,761,987 Bechwith.

Claims 12, 13 and 14 have been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

The Examiner additionally noted that the rejection of claim 1 may be overcome by adding recitations that the sealing layers extend to cover the air gap and that the channels are on the sides of the stator casing.

Claim 1 has been amended in a manner along the lines suggested by the Examiner. In particular, claim 1 has been amended to recite that an annular component is mounted on the stator part. The annular component has two legs that are disposed on sides of the stator. Channels are formed on both sides between the legs and the stator.

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Support for the amendment is found at least at page 5, line 161 – page 6, line 172 and page 11, lines 346-352 of the present specification.

Additionally, claim 1 has been amended along the lines suggested by the Examiner to recite that the sealing layer for the air gap extends between the legs of the annular component, for example as recited at page 11, lines 351-352.

Claim 1 is thus amended along the lines suggested by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments regarding the sealing layer and the channels place the claimed invention further outside the scope of the prior art as noted by the Examiner. In view of these amendments, the rejection of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all pending claims are now in allowable condition. Early issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

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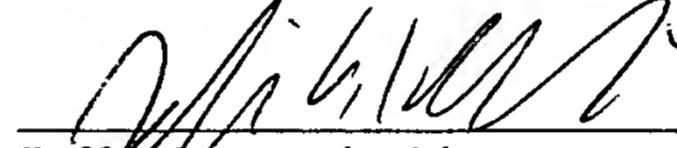
If the Examiner is of the opinion that the prosecution of this application would be advanced by a personal interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fee necessitated by this Amendment to our Deposit Account No. 22-0261.

1-26-04

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Date

Respectfully submitted,

  
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